

Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting
August 17, 2015
Cecil F. Gilkerson Community Activities Center

The regular monthly meeting of the Harrisonburg Parks & Recreation Commission was held on Monday, August 17, 2015 at 7:00 pm in the Community Activities Center. Chair D. D. Dawson called the meeting to order with the following commission members present: Joe Riley, Deanna Reed, Abe Shearer, John Marr, and Anthony Hill. Absent were Brent Holsinger and Ritchie Vaughan. Also present were Lee Foerster and David Wigginton from Parks & Recreation.

1. Approval of the minutes – The minutes from the June meeting were inadvertently omitted from the commission members packet so approving the minutes was deferred to the September meeting.
2. Weather phenomenon at Purcell – Lee showed an aerial photo of how rain water runoff from east of the interstate affects Purcell Park. The storm that moved through the area about 3 weeks prior left the east half of Purcell under water while the west part of Purcell was left virtually dry and evening games were held as scheduled.
3. Activity Guide – The new activity guide is out and we are taking registration for fall classes. The activity guide is now available in Spanish on the city's web site and we have hard copies in the office. The activity guide is sent out to 22801 and 22802 addresses and selected county addresses. The cost of printing and mailing the guide is approximately \$6500 per issue.
4. Fiscal Year 2008 – 2016 Budget Analysis – Lee showed commissioners the breakdown for 2008 – 2015 on a spreadsheet. The 2008 budget is actually more than the 2016 budget. The major change in operating has been pay increases and increases in health care insurance. Capital has been down for several years. We try very hard to utilize the budget effectively and efficiently, not spending funds at the last minute to use excess funds. We have more facilities and are running more programs now than ever before.
5. Olympic pool issue – On Wednesday, August 5, the impeller on the Olympic pool broke causing the Olympic pool to be closed down due to the inability to circulate the water properly and health concerns. The impeller had to be replaced and we contacted National Pools who was able to have an impeller sent to us which arrived in about a week. The maintenance crew was able to install the new impeller and we were back in operation on Thursday, August 13. We can only remember 1 other impeller that went down on the diving pool many years ago. This is not an item we keep on hand due to the cost of \$2500 but we will look at changing our thinking on this and will keep one on hand for the future. We could only allow approximately 250 swimmers in the diving pool and thankfully being late in the swim season, did not have a tremendous impact on the general public. If this had occurred in June, we would have upset many customers.
6. Staff changes – Pool Supervisor Noelle Burgess is leaving to return to school at VCU. She has been with the Aquatics division for about 5 years and has done a great job working with Kristin. A.J. Morris has been hired to take Noelle's place. We will be advertising for a full time lifeguard very soon.
 - When Jeremy Harold was hired as the new Parks Superintendent that left a General Supervisor position open. We have just completed interviews and have awarded the position to another internal candidate, Matt Muterspaugh, who has

been with the department for about 14 years. Matt is a most valuable employee who is able to perform many of the tasks that normally would be contracted out.

7. Facility project reviews:

- Ramblewood – will start seeing some action beginning tomorrow night with kick ball and junior league football practice. When completed and grass is fully established, there will be youth football games played there. The city is still receiving fill material from JMU projects like the demolition of Howard Johnson's and the old Rockingham Memorial Hospital. The disc golf group is working to rearrange the original layout of the disc golf course because of the Harrisonburg Police Department's firing range. 3 – 4 holes will need to be adjusted as to not interfere with the police operations at the site. Most of the bike trail areas are in the "no zone" area. HPD has a lot of time and money invested in the site and wants to find a fair and equitable solution to the issues present.
- Price-Rotary Senior Center – We have applied for Community Development Block Grant funds to renovate the senior building and parking lot. There must be an environmental study done on the site and engineering plans are needed to see what specific areas may be disturbed during renovation. We may need to spend funds on engineering plans before getting CDBG approval for the project.
- Smithland field #5 – Construction documents should be finished by September or October of this year and can be sent out as an RFP in November. Field #4 is about ready for play but the site lacks the proper parking surface to accommodate activity. The department receives about \$6000 - \$7000 per year in rent on the property now from crops.
- There was a bear sighting at the dog park yesterday. One of our parks staff members went out and did see the bear as it scampered off through the corn field.

8. Special Events Update – David just reminded the commission members of upcoming events – Dog Swim, International Festival, Race to beat breast Cancer, pictures from the Youth Triathlon.

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 21 at 6:00 p.m., at Hillandale Park, Shelter #10 for a presentation from members of the Harrisonburg Bicycle Community on trail design, construction, maintenance and upkeep.